

THE CORNER STONES.

Dr. Talmage Preaches an Antielection Sermon.

The Need of Pure Men in Office—The Evil of Breaking Any of the Commandments—Immoral Influence of Bad Officials.

Rev. T. DeWitt Talmage, in his sermon at Brooklyn just before the fall elections, preached for the benefit of voters throughout the country. The text was from Exodus xx. 18: "And all the people saw the thunderings and the lightnings and the noise of the trumpet and the mountain smoking." Dr. Talmage said:

On the eve of elections in the sixty counties of this state, and in all the counties of some of the other states, while there are many hundreds of nominees to office, it is appropriate and important that I preach this Before Election Sermon.

My text informs you that the lightnings and earthquakes united their forces to wreck a mountain of Arabia Petra in olden time, and travelers to-day find heaps of porphyry and greenstone rocks, boulder against boulder, the remains of the first law library, written, not on parchment or papyrus, but on shattered slabs of granite. The corner stones of all morality, of all wise law, of all righteous jurisprudence, of all good government, are the two tablets of stone on which were written the Ten Commandments. All Roman law, all French law, all English law, all American law that is worth anything, all common law, civil law, criminal law, martial law, law of nations were rocked in the cradle of the twentieth chapter of Exodus. And it would be well in these times of great political agitation if the newspapers would print the Decalogue some day in place of the able editorial. The fact is that some people suppose that the law has passed out of existence, and some are not aware of some of the passages of that law and others say this or that is of the more importance, when no one has any right to make such an assertion. These laws are the pillars of society, and if you remove one pillar you damage the whole structure. I have noticed that men are particularly vehement against sins to which they are not particularly tempted, and find no especial wrath against sins which they themselves indulge. Many questions are before the people in the coming elections all over this land, but I shall try to show you that the most important thing to be settled about all these candidates is their personal, moral character. The Decalogue forbids idolatry, image-making, profanity, maltreatment of parents, Sabbath desecration, murder, theft, incontinence, lying and covetousness. That is the Decalogue by which you and I will have to be tried, and by the same Decalogue you and I must try candidates for office.

Most certainly are we not to take the statement of red-hot partisanship as the real character of any man. From nearly all the great cities of this land I receive daily or weekly newspapers, sent to me regularly and in compliment, so I see both sides—I see all sides—and it is most entertaining and my regular amusement to read the opposite statements. The one statement says the man is an angel, and the other says he is a devil; and I split the difference, and I find him halfway between. There never has been an honest or respectable man running for the United States presidency, or for a judgeship, or for the mayoralty, or for the shrievalty, since the foundation of the American government, if we may believe the old files of newspapers in the museums. What a mercy it is that they were not all hung before they were inaugurated! If a man believe one-half of what he sees in the newspapers in these times his career will be very short outside of Bloomingdale insane asylum.

I warn you against the mistake which many are making, and always do make, of applying a different standard of character for those in prominent position from the standard they apply for ordinary persons. However much a man may have, or however high the position he gets, he has no especial liberty given him in the interpretation of the Ten Commandments. A great sinner is no more to be excused than a small sinner. Do not charge illustrious defection to eccentricity or chop off the Ten Commandments to suit especial cases. The right is everlastingly right and the wrong is everlastingly wrong. If any man nominated for any office in this city or state differs from the Decalogue, do not fix up the Decalogue, but fix him up. The law must stand whatever else may fall.

I call your attention also to the fact that you are all aware of, that the breaking of one commandment makes it the more easily to break all of them, and the philosophy is plain. Any kind of sin weakens the conscience, and if the conscience is weakened, that opens the door for all kinds of transgression. If, for instance, a man go into this political campaign wielding scurrility as his chief weapon, and he believes everything bad about a man, and believes nothing good, how long before that man himself will get over the moral depression. Neither in time nor eternity. If I utter a falsehood in regard to a man I may damage him, but I get for myself ten-fold more damage. If a man be guilty of malfeasance in office, he will, under provocation, com-

mit any sin. He who will steal will lie, and he who will lie will steal.

If, for instance, a man be impure it opens the door for all other iniquity, for in that one iniquity he commits theft of the worst kind, and covetousness of the worst kind, and falsehood—pretending to be decent when he is not—and maltreats his parents by disgracing their name, if they were good. Be careful, therefore, how you charge that sin against any man either in high place or low place, either in office or out of office, because when you make that charge against a man you charge him with all villainies, with all disgusting propensities, with all rottenness.

And, then, when you investigate a man on such subjects, you must go to the whole length of the investigation and find out whether or not he has repented. He may have been on his knees before God and implored the divine forgiveness, and he may have implored the forgiveness of society and the forgiveness of the world; although if a man commit sin at 30 or 35 years of age there is not one case out of a thousand where he ever repents. You must in your investigation see if it is possible that the one case investigated may not have been the exception. But do not chop off the seventh commandment to suit the case. Do not change Fairbank's scale to suit what you are weighing with it. Do not cut off a yardstick to suit the dry goods you are measuring. Let the law stand, and never tamper with it.

Above all, I charge you, do not join in the cry that I have heard—for fifteen, twenty years I have heard it—that there is no such thing as purity. If you make that charge you are a four-mouthed scoundrel of the human race. You are a leper. Make room for that leper! When a man by pen or type or tongue utters such a slander on the human race, that there is no such thing as purity, I know right away that that man himself is a walking lazaretto, a reeking ulcer, and is fit for no society better than that of devils damned.

The committing of one sin opens the door for the commission of other sins. You see it every day. Those embezzlers, those bank cashiers absconding, as soon as they are brought to justice, develop the fact that they were in all kinds of sin. No exception to the rule. They all kept bad company, they nearly all gambled, they all went to places where they ought not. Why? The commission of one sin opened the gate for all the other sins. Sins go in flocks, in droves and in herds. You open the door for one sin, that invites in all the miserable congregation.

Some of the campaign orators this autumn, some of them, bombarding the suffering candidates all the week, will think no wrong in Sabbath breaking. All the week hurling the eighth commandment at one candidate, the seventh commandment at another candidate, and the ninth commandment at still another, what are they doing with the fourth commandment, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy?" Breaking it. Is not the fourth commandment as important as the eighth, as the seventh, as the ninth? Some of these political campaign orators, as I have seen them reported in other years, and as I have heard it in regard to them, bombarding the suffering candidates all the week, yet tossing the name of God from their lips recklessly, guilty of profanity. What are they doing with the third commandment? Is not the third commandment, which says "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain"—is not the third commandment as important as the other seven?

I have this book for my authority when I say that the man who swears or the man who breaks the Sabbath is as culpable before God as those candidates who break other commandments. What right have you and I to select which commandment we will keep and which we will break? Better not try to measure the thunderbolts of the Almighty, saying this has less blaze, this has less momentum. Better not handle the guns, better not experiment much with the divine ammunition. Cicero said he saw the Iliad written on a nut shell, and you and I have seen the Lord's prayer written on a 5-cent piece; but the whole tendency of these times is to write the Ten Commandments so small that nobody can see them.

Herodotus said that Nitocris, the daughter of Nebuchadnezzar, was so fascinated with her beautiful village of Ardericca that she had the river above Babylon changed so it wound this way and wound that, and curved this way and curved that, and though you sailed on it for three days every day you would be in sight of that exquisite village. Now, I do not care which way you sail in morals, or which way you sail in life, if you only sail within sight of this beautiful group of divine commandments. Although they may sometimes seem to be a little singular, I do not care which way you sail, if you sail in sight of them you will never run aground and you will never be shipwrecked. Society needs toning up on all these subjects. I tell you there is nothing worse to fight than the ten regiments, with bayonets and sabres of fire, marching down the side of Mount Sinai. They always gain the victory, and those who fight against them go under.

Let not ladies and gentlemen in this nineteenth century revise the Ten Commandments, but let them in society and at the polls put to the front those who come the nearest to this God-lift-

ed standard. On the first Tuesday morning in November read the twentieth chapter of Exodus at family prayers. The moral or immoral character of the officers elected will add 75 per cent. unto or subtract 75 per cent. from the public morals. You and I cannot afford to have bad officials; the young men of this country cannot afford to have bad officials; the commercial, the moral, the artistic, the agricultural, the manufacturing, the religious interests of this country, cannot afford to have bad officials; and if you, on looking over the whole field, cannot find men who, in your estimation, come within reasonable distance of obedience of the Decalogue, stay at home and do not vote at all.

I suppose when in the city of Sodom there were four candidates put up for office, and Lot did not believe in any of them, he did not register. I suppose if there came a crisis in the politics of Babylon, where Daniel did not believe in any of the candidates, he staid at home on election day, praying with his face toward Jerusalem. But we have no such crisis, we have no such exigency, thank God. But I have to say to you to-day that the moral character of rulers always affects the ruled; and I appeal to history. Wicked King Manasseh depressed the moral tone of all the nation of Judah, and threw them into idolatry. Good King Josiah lifted up the whole nation by his excellent example. Why is it that to-day England is higher up in morals than at any time in her national history? It is because she has the best ruler in all Europe, all the attempts to scandalize her name a failure. The political power of Talleyrand brooded all the political tricksters of the last ninety years. The dishonest vice presidency of Aaron Burr blasted this nation until important letters were written in cipher, because the people could not trust the United States mail. And let the court circles of Louis XV. and Henry VIII. march out, followed by the debauched nations.

The higher up you put a bad man the worse is his power for evil. Be careful, therefore, how you elevate into any style of authority men who are in any wise antagonistic to the Ten Commandments.

I say we want a tonic—a mighty tonic—a corrective—an all-powerful corrective—and Moses in the text, with steady hand, notwithstanding the jarring mountains and the full orchestra of the tempest and the blazing of the air, pours out ten drops—no more, no less—which our people need to take for their moral convalescence.

But I shall not leave you under the discouragement of the Ten Commandments, because we have all offended. There is another mountain in sight, and while one mountain thunders the other answers in thunder; and while Mount Sinai, with lightning, writes doom, the other mountain, with lightning, writes mercy. The only way you will ever spike the guns of the Decalogue is by the spikes of the cross. The only rock that will ever stop the Sinaiic upheavals is the Rock of Ages. Mount Calvary is higher than Mount Sinai. The English survey expedition, I know, say that one Sinaiic peak is 7,000 feet high and another 8,000 and another 9,000 feet high, and travelers tell us that Mount Calvary is only a bluff outside of the wall of Jerusalem; but Calvary in moral significance overtops and overshadows all the mountains of the hemispheres, and Mount Washington and Mount Blanc and the Himalayas are hillocks compared with it. You know that sometimes one fortress will silence another fortress. Moultrie silenced Sumter; and against the mountain of the law I put the mountain of the Cross. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die," booms one, until the earth jars under the cannonade. "Save them from going down to the pit, I have found a ransom," pleads the other, until earth and heaven and hell tremble under the reverberation. And Moses, who commands the one, surrenders to Christ, who commands the other.

Once by the law our hopes were slain. But now in Christ we live again.

The survey expedition says that the Sinaiic mountains have wadis, or water courses—Alleyah and Ajelah—emptying into Feiran. But those streams are not navigable. No boat put into those rocky streams could sail. But I have to tell you this day that the boat of gospel rescue comes right up amid the water-courses of Sinaiic gloom and threat, ready to take us off from under the shadows into the calm sunlight of God's pardon and into the land of peace. Oh, if you could see that boat of gospel rescue coming this day, you would feel as John Gilmore, in his book, "The Storm Warriors," says that a ship's crew felt on the Kentish Sands, off the coast of England, when they were being beaten to pieces and they all felt they must die! They had given up all hope, and every moment washed off another plank from the wreck, and they said: "We must die, we must die!" But after awhile they saw a Ramsgate life-boat coming through the breakers for them, and the man standing highest up on the wreck said: "Can it be? Can it be? It is, it is, it is! Thank God! It is, it is, it is! The Ramsgate life-boat! It is, it is, it is!" And the old jack tar, describing that life-boat to his comrades after he got ashore, said: "Oh, my lads, what a beauty it did seem, coming through the breakers that awful day!" May God, through the mercy in Jesus Christ, take us all off the miserable wreck of our sin into the beautiful life-boat of the gospel.

AGRICULTURAL HINTS.

CORN HOUSE PLAN.

A Building That Saves the Crop from Damaging Effects.

The accompanying illustrations from sketches by C. E. Benton, of Massachusetts, show a novel and useful plan for a corn house, by which not only more corn is sheltered in proportion to the size and expense of the building, but what is of vastly more importance, the corn is saved from the damaging effects of driving rain and snow, which in moist climates so seriously affect the value of the crop in the old-fashioned cribs, while it is waiting to be ground or fed. The ordinary crib has slatted sides, and the ventilation is horizontal, hence the driving rain and snow finds easy access to every ear of corn. But by this method the ventilation, while even more perfect, is from the bottom upwards, which entirely protects the corn from direct exposure to the elements. The building, which may be of any convenient size or proportion, is placed upon chestnut or oak posts two feet high,

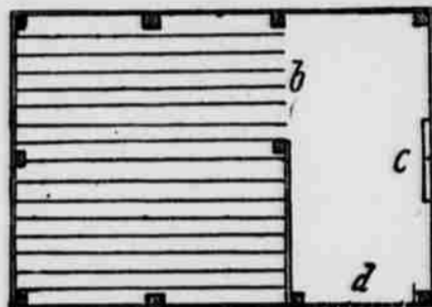


FIG. 1.—FLOOR PLAN OF CORN HOUSE.

which are at proper intervals and are firmly set in the ground. A building of suitable size for a small farm is eight by twelve feet, and six feet from sill to plate. A partition, as shown in Fig. 1, leaves an alleyway four by eight feet at one end, with an outside door, *a*, as well as a doorway, *b*, which gives access to the crib. For convenience there should also be a window at *c*.

This makes a convenient place in which a corn-sheller may be stored and used, and in which, also, the bags may be filled when a grist is being put up for the mill. The arrangement leaves a crib eight feet square for the corn, and, as it could be filled considerably above the plates, it would store about four hundred bushels of ears, or sufficient to make two hundred bushels shelled. The bottom of the crib is floored with narrow boards, leaving a space of three-fourths of an inch between the boards, thus making a slat bottom to the crib instead of slat sides. The sides should be boarded tight like any other building. To secure perfect ventilation, rough doors are hung from the sills of the building, against the posts on which it rests, and care is taken while the corn is curing to keep all these ventilating doors closed, except on the side towards the wind. Thus a current of air will be continually forced up through the corn, and escape through the ventilator in the roof. Fig. 2 shows the ventilation

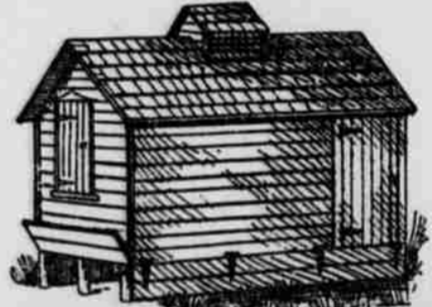


FIG. 2.—PERSPECTIVE VIEW OF CORN HOUSE.

door open at the end of the building and held up by a hook. An upper door is provided through which to fill the crib, and if it desired to fill it to the very roof this may be accomplished by carrying the last few bushels up a step ladder in the alleyway.—American Agriculturist.

AMONG THE POULTRY.

It is a good plan to cull out and sell early all the chickens that are not to be wintered.

Even in winter it is an item to have dust for the fowls where they can flutter at will.

The wise poultryman avoids extremes, but feeds enough to keep the fowls in a good, thrifty condition.

It is when the hens are idle and closely confined that they are most liable to fall into the habit of feather pulling.

The objection to throwing out the egg shells to the hens is the liability of their getting into the habit of eating eggs.

In caponizing, the earlier a bird reaches maturity in his natural state the earlier the operation should be performed.

In obtaining the highest prices from special customers, it will pay to put all the eggs of one color together before sending to market.

DIARRHEA may often be mistaken for cholera, as the symptoms at the start are nearly the same. As soon as the birds are affected they have a downcast look, become sleepy, lose strength and have more or less fever.

PROPERLY managed, an incubator will hatch fully as many eggs in proportion as the average hen, especially during the winter. But it is necessary to fully understand the machine and to give proper care in order to obtain the best results. Now is a good time to buy and try an incubator, as it will give plenty of time to get accustomed to managing it before it is necessary to fill for hatching.—St. Louis Republic.

THE AMERICAN FARMER.

Why His Future Looks More Promising Than Ever Before.

At no time in the history of the country has the future of agriculture been more promising. There was a time, not long ago, when the soil and the farmer were not on friendly terms, when there was a conflict between them. But that time is past, or is passing with the progressive farmer.

He has learned, is learning every day, that the fault was with him and not the land. The soil, lacking certain ingredients, could not produce good results. The horse cannot be expected to work at the plow all day, many days, if fed only on dry hay.

To-day the farmer is coaxing his land very much as he does his stock, or he is providing food for his plants with almost as much care as he feeds his animals, if he expects to be successful. The farmer tests his land for himself; he does not wait for the chemist, or prefers to be his own chemist in his way. If potash, nitrogen or phosphoric acid are wanted, he adds them, and he has come to the stage of independence when he mixes his own fertilizers, and knows exactly what he has to work. That's progress. Commercial fertilizers are the farmers' aids, but the government analysis and inspection has opened his eyes, and he sees now that he may prepare his own fertilizers and save money.

The farmer no longer plants haphazard; he has begun to see that agriculture is an art, a science more intricate than any other; that to be successful in its prosecution he must know several sciences. No longer does he merely drop a potato in the earth, cover it up, keep down the weeds and dig the increase in the fall. He studies the soil and the fertilizer and then the potato. Shall he plant large or small potatoes, cut or uncut, one eye or more, the stem end or the seed end?

Thus throughout the range of agriculture every step is thought out and practically made in advance. There are many croakers about agriculture, some editorial croakers in newspaper offices who, possibly, might be able to tell a hay-cutter from a grindstone, who rise up periodically to say with a loud voice (more or less, according to their circulation) that agriculture has a black eye; that it is limping along on one leg, and not a very strong leg at that, and that the whole fabric of agriculture, like the sheep, is going to the dogs.

If these croakers had attended some of the "winter meetings" that have been held in the different states last winter and seen the interest and enthusiasm, seen the men—aye, the women, too, assembled and spent two or three days in asking each other questions and comparing notes, the agricultural pessimist would admit, if honest, that there is a force behind agriculture that will not let it stand still. Let every farmer keep his shoulder to the wheel. It turns easier than it did, and does not have to be helped out of so many ruts and quagmires as it did. Let every farmer be proud of his calling, stick to it, dignify it and swear by it (not profanely).

Why, it is not long ago when the farmer at gatherings of any kind took a back seat; it was rare to see a farmer on the platform. All the speeches were made by the lawyer, the clergyman and the "good talker" of no calling or profession. That has changed. The farmer got nearer and nearer to the platform, and now, forsooth, he is on it and doing the talking, and taking no odds of any man. This is not idle talk; it is fact. Agriculture is alive.—George Appleton, in Farm and Fireside.

Epilepsy in Pigs.

This disease is not at all uncommon in pigs. It is recognized by the pig falling suddenly, mostly when feeding, trembling, convulsed and screaming. The animal foams at the mouth, lies for a few minutes and then gets up and goes to feeding again, seemingly no worse for its experience. The disease is due to some lesion of the brain and is inherited. For this reason pigs so affected should not be used for breeding. It is not a disease that prevents the animal from growing or fattening, and it does not affect the meat in any way injuriously. It is wholly nervous and due to some disordered condition of the brain, but as the brain is very sensitive to the effects of indigestion it is often the case that this disturbance may be traced to this cause. Then treatment may be useful; otherwise it is not.

Sugar Beets in America.

One of the agricultural experiment stations reports that beets raised from improved home-grown seed contain twenty-five per cent. more sugar than beets raised from imported seed. Considering that the imported seed is the best seed from foreign countries, where the beet-sugar industry has been a long-established success, this is a remarkable showing. The home-grown seed gave results from ten to twenty per cent. better this year than last. Such rapid improvement on the best that Germany has produced in long years of patient work indicates advantages of soil and climate and the probability that this country will surpass foreign countries in the production of beet sugar.—Farm and Fireside.

CHICKS that give promise of proving standard fowls will thrive much better if the culs are removed and more room in the quarters and a freer range given to those that are to be kept.

If a hen can be made to lay one egg a week she will pay the cost of keeping.